

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 3, 6-17, 21, 22 and 24-27 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 2, 4-5, 18-20 and 23 are canceled, claims 1, 3, 7, 9, 10, 16, 17 and 21 are amended, and new claim 27 is added.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 9, 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,265,699 to Ladany, claims 2-5, 9-11, 17-19, 22 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over JP 08-043678A to Kashiwazaki, claims 1-5, 7, 9, 10, 16-22 over 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over JP 02-277006 to Nakamura, claims 1, 2, 9, 16, 17 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Publication No. 2001/0033712A1 to Cox et al., claims 1, 2, and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,674,940 to Kroupenkine, claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kashiwazaki, claims 6 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Nakamura, claims 12, 13, 25 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ladany, claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ladany in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,268,113 to Noel, claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ladany and U.S. Publication No. 2002/0118924 to Murata, claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kroupenkine and Noel and claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kroupenkine and Murata.

With respect to claims 2, 4-5, 18, 19, 20 and 23 this rejection is moot. With respect to the remaining claims this rejection is respectfully traversed.

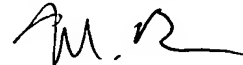
None of the applied references disclose the core being uncladded at an end of the optical fiber, the core and the clad forming a protrusion at an end of the optical fiber, as in amended independent claims 1, 16 and 17. The Office Action asserts with respect to canceled claim 5 that Kashiwazaki discloses the core and the clad forming a protrusion at an end of the optical fiber because the core is recessed so that the clad forms a protrusion. However, this does not include the feature of the core being uncladded as recited in claims 1, 16 and 17.

With respect to new claim 27, none of the applied references disclose the end face of the core being higher than an end face of the clad at the end of the optical fiber.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff  
Registration No. 27,075

Michael Britton  
Registration No. 47,260

JAO:MB/kzb

Attachment:

Information Disclosure Statement

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**OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC**  
**P.O. Box 19928**  
**Alexandria, Virginia 22320**  
**Telephone: (703) 836-6400**

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